

## AFTERMATH OF THE WAR

15 hopeful that some solution might be readied, but Russia presented them with a *fait accompli* just prior to the opening of the conference for the Azerbaijan Republic was proclaimed three days before their arrival. Accompanied by their area experts, Sir Reader Bullard, British Ambassador to Iran, and John D. Jernegan, Second Secretary of the American Embassy at Teheran, both Foreign Secretaries tried in vain to settle the Iranian problem. In the course of the conference Bevin proposed that a three-Power commission of Britain, Russia, and the United States visit Iran to settle differences. Bevin also suggested, with a view to reaching a compromise between Russia's special interest in Azerbaijan and the principle of Iranian territorial integrity, a scheme for the creation of local governments in Iran. The Russians, who initially seemed amenable to such a solution, reversed their attitude at the end of the conference and rejected Bevin's scheme. It is not quite clear what caused them to change their views. It is possible that the Soviet side expected a firmer stand on the part of the West on many international issues on the agenda, but seeing the will of the Western ministers falter (due to their ardent desire to reach agreement with the Russians rather than to stick to their principles), it decided that it could afford to be uncompromising on the Iranian issue.<sup>8</sup>

s In its issue for May 11, 1946 (no. 44, p. 378), the *L'S.S.R. Information Bullet.\**, an organ of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, contains an article, "On the Iranian Problem," by Atonovich, which may be regarded as a classical expression of the official Soviet attitude in this matter and which is typical of Soviet political terminology. The following are excerpts:

"After the termination of the Second World War the least sober minded people could not doubt that in the future Iran's relations with her great northern neigh-

bor must be built on a new basis free from hostility and  
adventurousness which  
are fraught with danger for Iran herself.

"Unfortunately, Iranian ruling circles failed by far to realize  
this simple truth  
at once. Suffice it to recall that as late as the end of last year  
and until February  
1946, the Iranian government was headed by the very same  
Hakimi who, when  
Minister in 1919, was one of the chief inspirers of aggressive  
plans against the  
Soviet Caucasus, Baku and the Soviet Transcaspian region.  
These plans found  
their expression in official memoranda submitted by the Teheran  
Cabinet to the  
Versailles Conference. . . /\*

"The growth of the democratic movement in Iran prompted  
British and American  
circles to raise the question of interference into Iran's  
internal affairs. As  
early as December 1945, during the conference of the three  
Foreign Ministers in  
Moscow, Bevin made a proposal, also supported by the  
representative of the United